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PS
THE SERVICE FLAG

AND

OTHER POEMS

By

ALICE TAYLOR HILL

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By Alice Taylor Hill

To my father and mother
in Heaven

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AND

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THE POET'S LAMENT

If I could sing the songs that fill
My soul with melody,
The hearts of all mankind would thrill
At my sweet poesy;

But ere I write them they are fled
From out my rhyming brain;
And these you read, my friend, instead
Are vagrants in their train.

O Heaven, touch with fire my pen,
And fix my fleeing thought;
That messages I bring to men
May be with virtue fraught.

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THE SERVICE FLAG

RED for his courage high,

Eager to go!

WHITE for the soul of him,

Pure as the snow.

BLUE for the heart of him,

Loyal and true;

STAR for his faith in God,

Whose will he knew.

RED for the blood he shed

On field of pain;

WHITE for the cause he served,

Victory to gain.

GOLD for the soul of him,

Tried and refined;

Into the heart of him

Heaven hath shined!

IN MEMORIAM

Not his on battle-field to die
With fallen comrades lying;
While lurid war-flames lit the sky
And starry flags were flying.

Not his to grapple with the foe
In zealous self-forgetting;
Bravely dealing blow for blow
And giving more than getting!

Not his the glad, exultant shout
The startled heavens rending,
When Prussian hosts were turned to rout,
The war's grim harvest ending.

The plague-fiend, ally of the Hun,
Touched him with deadly finger;
A woman's prayers for warrior-son
Around his grave still linger!

A hero he no less than they,
Who in the flare and thunder,
Kept the Hunnish hordes at bay
And brake their bands in sunder!

With our unnumbered brave he lies,
Who could not flinch nor falter;
Whose souls like holy incense rise
From Liberty's high altar!

MY FATHER

Away from my home—'tis the Sabbath eve,
Alone and apart, my memory doth weave
Sweet thoughts of my father, his kindly face,
His clear, hearty voice and his gentle grace.

I think of my father—his dear, gray head,
Think of the times I have thoughtlessly said
Words with a sting that were bitter, unkind,
Why will they echo tonight in my mind?

I think of the burdens my father has borne,
The sorrows and griefs he has had to mourn;
Think of his gentleness, meekness of soul,
His love and devotion and great self-control.

I recall the prime of my father's life,
Before the years of the storm and strife;
I recall my father of yesterday
With his dark hair sparsely sprinkled with gray.

Thinking of father—his step now is slow,
'Tis much he misses our mother, I know;
He often looks lonely when all is so bright—
Father, dear father, I want you tonight!

MY MOTHER

Thou art far from me in the shadowy land,
Mother, dear mother,
I would I could touch thee with my hand—
Mother, my mother;
If I could hear thee gently speak,
And feel thy kisses on my cheek,
'Twould strengthen me when I am weak—
Mother, O mother.

Nothing about thee can I recall,
Mother, dear mother,
For God called thee when I was so small,
Mother, my mother;
There is an ache that naught can ease,
And though I have many things that please,
Friends and pleasures, yet more than these—
I want my mother.

SYMPATHY

My heart was very heavy,
And my very soul was sad,
When you pressed my hand so gently
In that kindly way you had.

You asked me not the reason
Of my seeming dark despair,
And I never could have told you
Half the burden of my care.

But I felt you comprehended
In that pressure of your hand;
For such sympathy unspoken
Comes from those who understand.

And my heart grew light and carefree,
While my very soul was glad;
Just because you tried to comfort
In that friendly way you had!

REMINISCENCE

There's a quiet little village
In a state not far away;
Where my thoughts are ever turning,
Where I fain would be today.

There's a shady college campus
In a quaint New England town;
Where the famous old Green Mountains
Are forever looking down.

They are purple-shadowed mountains
That in awesome grandeur stand;
As Nature's mighty battlement
Do they garrison the land.
Once more on the grassy campus,
I sit 'neath the age-old trees;
And list to the squirrels chatter
And the whisper of the breeze.

I watch the sun in his splendor
In the western sky decline;
Whilst the moon in calmer glory
In her turn begins to shine.

And I see the gray-stone chapel
That stands on the sunny height;
The gleam in its lofty tower
Dispelling the gloom of night.

And I hear the bells a-ringing
In a sweet and tuneful chime;
Like an angel's benediction
In the summer evening-time.

Once again familiar faces
Come into memory's view;
And I miss the well-known places
And the things we used to do.

I tire of the grim old city
With its din and ceaseless strife;
And I long for God's own country
With its broader, freer life.

I wish I could stand this evening
In old Middlebury town;
With the friends I love, beside me,
And behold the sun go down!

THE LADY OF THE ROSE-COLORED SHAWL

So lightly she trippeth into the hall,
My lady with powdered hair;
For she must go to the Old Folks' Ball,
And her lover, he waits on the stair.

Her lover, he waits in the long, wide hall,
As she trippeth so lightly down;
Under her arm a rose-colored shawl,
Fluffy and all of down.

How merry her laugh and her eye how bright
As she greets him on the stair;
My lady with fair hair powdered white,
So young and debonair.

Buckles he wears that sparkle and gleam,
And a coat of the days of yore;
Methinks they are creatures of a dream
As they glide through the open door.

Right gallant is he as the olden day
As he takes her arm in the hall;
And around her as she trips away
He throws the rose-colored shawl.

Ah, happy their hearts, the youth and the maid,
As they go to the Old Folks' Ball;
I ween he may ne'er from my memory fade,
Nor his lady of the rose-colored shawl.

ATONEMENT

I sit on the porch at the closing of day,
While the frolicsome breezes are having their way,
And the sun is trailing along in the west
Fair, luminous clouds as he goes to his rest.
The leaves are dancing on bush and tree,
The ripples are sparkling upon the blue sea,
The hush of the twilight beginneth to fall,
And the spirit of nature hovers o'er all.
Sweet spirit of nature, the breath of the soul,
Is the spirit of God, man's ultimate goal;

Thence comes that blest feeling of rest and of
peace,
That brings from the cares of the world our re-
lease.
A feeling of oneness with all that is good,
With God and with Nature, with mountain and
wood;
'Tis then we can feel the throbbings of love
In the heart of our Father who reigneth above,
And dwelleth below in the bosoms that feel
The breath of the unseen, the touch of the real!

TEN LITTLE AEROPLANES

Ten little aeroplanes sailing o'er the brine,
One tumbled in and then there were nine;
Nine little aeroplanes flying up the state,
One got to Albany, then there were eight.
Eight little aeroplanes steering right for heaven,
One got lost on the way, then there were seven;
Seven little aeroplanes all performing tricks,
One broke his steering gear, then there were six.
Six little aeroplanes bound to arrive,
One ran out of gasolene, then there were five.
Five little aeroplanes counting up the score,
One scaled the greatest height, then there were
four.
Four little aeroplanes flying near a tree,
One in the branches caught, then there were three.
Three little aeroplanes almost lost to view,
One stayed behind on Mars, then there were two.
Two little aeroplanes flying too near the sun?
One got his wings afire, then there was one.
One little aeroplane having all the fun,
For he got a silver cup when the race was won.

AN APRIL WALK

I walked along by the Lower Bay
In the afternoon of a Sabbath day,
On the road that winds by the placid sea
Alone, for nobody walked with me.

'Twas April time and the world was fair,
The voices of Nature filled the air;
The sparrows chirped in the budding tree,
And I longed for a friend to walk with me.

The fields had put on new suits of green,
The flowering quince in rows was seen;
I saw the glory of bush and tree
Alone, for nobody walked with me.

The breeze was fragrant with spring-time's balm,
Fair Nature smiled in her Sabbath calm;
No one was with me the beauty to see,
Alas, for nobody walked with me.

A prayer made I on that April day,
As I walked by the side of the rippling bay;
"O God of woodland, mountain and sea—
Oh, send me a friend to walk with me!

A WALK

We walked to and fro on the wooden way
That leads from the land out into the bay,
At sunset time on a sweet May day—

A friend and I;

The air was cool, the heavens were fair
And the hand of Nature with skillful care,
Was painting with fairest of colors rare
Clouds in the sky.

We stood on the pier, the breeze at our back,
As we looked at the sail-boats roll and tack,
And at many a weather-worn fishing-smack—

 This friend and I;

With boisterous tread came the rising tide,
In delight broke the waves on either side,
While the fish-hawks flapped o'er the billows wide,
 Dark in the sky.

We talked of the things to our hearts most dear,
With much of laughter, a little of fear,
Of the past, the present, the coming year—

 That friend and I:

We shall often recall the words we said,
With various meanings into them read,
When the days of our girlhood, past and dead,
 Behind us lie.

OCTOBER

On a wondrously fair October day
I wandered afar o'er the hills away;
The hush of the Sabbath was in the air,
A fullness of peace, an absence of care.

And Nature, the artist, with skillful hand,
Was painting rare pictures throughout the land;
In her various shades of red and gold,
The wealth of the autumn was richly told.

Oh, where are there colors more rare than these
That dye the leaves of the lowliest trees?
The bright yellow tints and the crimsons vie
To make the heart warm and delight the eye.

I walked till the chill of the evening came
With its frosty touch to the ivy's flame;
Till the sun in the west was sinking low,
And the twilight breezes began to blow.

A hush came over the beautiful bay
In the glow of the sun's departing ray;
A violet haze was in all the sky,
And the God of Nature seemed very nigh.

FROM THE SCHOOLROOM

They look on us with cool disdain,
These mothers who have given sons
To wage the conflict overseas
Against the cruel and grasping Huns.

They say we nothing know of fear,
Of apprehension still and dread,
That tensely grips each mother-heart
When reading through the lists of dead.

We gave no sons—our single state
Has spared us from the grief and pain;
Deprived us of the boast and pride—
We mourn no filial patriots slain!

But we gave sons! be Heaven our proof,
That tally keeps of thoughts and prayers,
Which build the background of our dreams,
And haunt our daily round of cares.

We too gave sons! not one or three,
A multitude from out our love;
Of sailor-lads and soldier-boys,
And aeronauts in flights above.

In mental throes we brought them forth
To see the light of learning's gleam;
As from Jove's brain Minerva sprung,
Born of his thought, his mind, his dream!

Daily with tender care we watched
Their power of thought expand and grow;
Rejoiced with them in knowledge gained,
Their eagerness all to learn and know!

With patient and untiring zeal
We sought to implant ideas of worth;
And nurture the seeds of wisdom sown—
Who says we brought no sons to birth?

As year by year our grown-up boys
Take their place in the marts of trade;
With modest pride our hearts exclaim:
"Behold the men that we have made!"

And when had dawned the direful day,
These lads of ours went forth to fight;
Full proof that we in daily task
Had taught them loyalty to right!

We too may fly our service flags,
All dotted o'er with deep blue stars;
For we, though mothers not in name,
Have yielded tribute unto Mars!

THE LOWER BAY

A song I sing of the beautiful bay
As it looked this morn at the break of day;
When from my window I caught the bright gleam
And glint on the waves of the sun's first beam.

The beautiful bay in its wild unrest,
Tumultuous heavings within its breast.
The hills of Staten stood clearly in view,
A steamer the Narrows was passing through;
The Hook seemed nearer than ever before,
Distinct with its low-lying, lonesome shore.
As I stood at my window and looked away
O'er the broad expanse of the beautiful bay,
The sun and the sky, the wind and the sod
With the sound of the waves were praising God.

CHARGE TO THE TEACHER

Smooth out that frown from your forehead, friend,
Before you go into your class;
Why should a teacher look cold and stern
When she meets the lad and the lass?
Then smile with the light upon your face
That reflects God's love from the soul;
And look with kindness on each child,
As you call the names from the roll.

Stifle that word of harshness, my friend,
Speak a gentler one in its stead;
Inspire in your pupils loving trust,
Not obedience born of dread.

Seek not the lauds of the rich and great,
Nor praise of the worldly wise;
Work for the love of the boy and girl
That beams from their trusting eyes.

With all your teaching, O friend of mine,
Impart a love of the truth;
Embody your precepts in your life,
Or you cannot reach the youth;

For the children watch you day by day,
And while neither you nor they may see;
As they listen to the words you speak,
What you are, they grow to be.

ESMERALDA

Oh, maiden with the sunlit hair,
Esma, Esmeralda!
Of burnished gold meseems its hue,
As yellow sunbeams shimmer through,
And flit athwart your face so fair—
Esmeralda, Esma!

Oh, maiden with the dancing eyes,
Esma, Esmeralda!
With your arch, coquettish look
Hid behind your history book,
At once so winsome and so wise—
Esmeralda, Esma!

Oh, maiden with the laughter sweet,
Esma, Esmeralda!
Sprightly ways and voice so cheery,
Though the day be dark and dreary;
May we your kind more often meet—
Esmeralda, Esma!

THE SPARROW'S FALL

Felled by the gale and the driving sleet,
Frozen and dead in the muddy street,
Mangled by heedless passing feet—

A poor little bird!

I had almost stepped on the tiny thing,
Stiff and stark with its broken wing,
And the cheery song that it loved to sing—
No more to be heard.

But why do I mourn the death of a bird?
So insignificant, so absurd!

Have you never read in the Holy Word,
God cares for all?

He saw it perched on the bare tree-limb,
Twittering notes of praise to Him,
And when the shadows were growing dim,
He saw it fall.

The Father in Heaven had heard it sing
Its song of joy in the gladsome Spring,
The frozen and dead and broken thing
To Him was known,
For He made us all, both man and beast,
And who shall say that the last is least,
Or that God's interest in them has ceased
There on His throne?

His ears receive every creature's call,
Be it man in His image or insect small,
With loving interest He watches all
Up there in the blue;
If then He notices birds that fly;
That sing today and tomorrow die,
How can you doubt that His watchful eye
Ever rests on you?

THE TWO HAMPERS

(An Old Legend)

Two angels came down from the heavenly land,
On the ladder Jacob saw;
In radiant splendor clad, and in his hand
Each angel a hamper bore.

The order was given them from God on high,
To travel throughout the land;
And gather petition and prayerful sigh
From the saints on every hand.

Now, the first angel's hamper was large and deep,
Petition, the angel's name;
He in it the prayers of the saints should keep
That to heaven for succor came.

But his brother's hamper, alas, 'twas small,
He, Thankfulness, had the hole;
To gather the praises and songs that fall
From the lips of each blest soul.

Throughout all the earth they wended their quiet
way,
Now, Petition went before;
While Thankfulness followed him day after day,
As he knocked at each heart's door.

Then at last they returned to their Lord on high
When their journey long was done;
And a glorious splendor filled the sky,
The glow of the setting sun.

Now, Petition was bending beneath his load,
And his flight was tired and slow;
With the prayers of earth his basket o'erflowed,
While some scattered lay below.

But Thankfulness rose on his swift airy wing
With his hamper to heaven's gate;
"The praise of the grateful of earth I bring,
But light is my hamper's weight.

'Twas only a few of the burdened who wept
And whose prayers my brother doth bear,
Their vows of praise and of gratitude kept,
When I did in turn appear."

And the Lord sadly said as he looked within
The depths of the basket small:
"Ah, how little, alas, has the gratitude been—
I answered the prayers of all."

WHERE VIOLETS GROW

I know a place where the violets grow
As soon as May is here;
As soon as the freshening breezes blow
And sun shines warm and clear.

They hide away in clumps of dank grass
That grow by the old mill creek;
You can easily miss them as you pass,
Unless you have come to seek.

The musical gush of the waterfall,
The low gurgle of the stream;
The cheery notes of the robin's call,
The water's bright glint and gleam.

The blue of the heavens over our head,
Blue violets at our feet;
And the toad that hops from his mossy bed
When we startle his retreat.

The rocky hillside just at our back,
Where the dogwood blossoms blow;
Come, Mary and Helen, Harry and Jack,
I know where violets grow.

TO THE FUTURE

Hail, thou golden, smiling Future—
How we stay our hopes on thee!
We, with every hidden yearning,
Toward thy light are ever turning,
For our full felicity.

O thou time of hope's fulfillment,
How our faith goes out to thee!
We gaze upon thy fields Elysian,
When blurred with tears our present vision
In Life's sad despondency.

O thou spring of consolation,
Thou blest gift of God to man!
We see thy finger onward beckoning,
And, weary with the Past's dark reckoning,
Hopefully thy promise scan.

Art thou but a vain delusion,
Mocking phantom of the air?
Mere false mirage for our misleading,
While we within our hearts are reading;
"In the future all is fair"?

False thou may be, golden Future,
Still our trust in thee is sweet;
Faith is strong and Hope assuring,
Nor Past nor Present is enduring,
Toward the Future tread our feet!

FARTHER ON

At this moment all is brightness
On my road;
And I scarce can feel the lightness
Of my load;
Yet deep within my soul I know
Tomorrow, it may not be so—
That I may have a deal of woe
Farther on.

I may meet with tears and sorrow
On my way;
Oft may dawn for me a morrow
Dark and gray;
But I grasp God's hand more tightly,
And know His sun will shine more brightly,
That my heart will beat more lightly
Farther on.

Why then mourn when troubles gather
O'er your head?
Do not doubt your Heavenly Father,
Trust instead;
Clouds will frown but soon comes clearing,
Perfect love casts out all fearing,
You will find the prospect cheering
Farther on.

GRATITUDE

A True Incident

(The Gentleman was John Ruskin)

The old beggar stood on the crowded street,
With his outstretched horny palm;
But the thoughtless multitudes passed him by,
With never a conscience qualm.

His eyes, they were dimmed with tears of age,
His hollow cheeks pinched and wan;
As there he stood in the cold bitter wind,
A homeless, friendless man.

But a gentleman soon comes down the street
A man he has seen somewhere;
'Tis the man who labors for London's poor—
Will he see him standing there?

He soon made his way through the heartless
throng,
He spoke but a word of cheer;
And dropped a coin in the palsied hand
And smiled in the face so drear.

But the old beggar, weeping, bent his head,
And kissed the gentleman's hand;
While invoking blessings upon his head
From saints in the heavenly land.

A bright tear flashed in the gentleman's eye,
He smiled but he could not speak;
So he threw his arm round the beggar's neck,
And he kissed the withered cheek.

Then out in the busy cold world he went
To minister to its needs;
The old beggar's tears he soon forgot
In the wealth of his kind deeds.

A fortnight later while passing that way
A small urchin touched his hand;
"Please, are you the gentleman sir, who kissed
The beggar-man on the Strand?

Day after day I have watched for you sir,
For the beggar, he is dead;
And he bade me, dying, to give you this,
For you were his friend, he said.

For he had no friend in the whole wide world
Till you were so kind to him."
The gentleman opened the queer package small
While his eyes grew strangely dim.

A small piece of cloth he brought to view
'Twas faded and torn and gray;
Bewildered, he slowly opened and read
The note that within it lay.

"This is all I have in the world to give"—
The scrawl on the paper ran;
To let you know what your kindness, sir, meant
To a poor, old, friendless man.

'Tis a precious relic, sacred and old,
A piece of St. Francis' gown;
I have had it with me throughout the years,
For it brought God's blessings down.

But now I am going where I shall need
Good St. Francis' aid no more;
So to you I bequeath this treasured cloth
Who were so good to me before.

It was not the coin you dropped in my hand,
(For that I was thankful too)
'Twas the brotherly love you gave to me,
That bound my old heart to you.

'Tis love, 'tis love that the friendless man craves,
Not alone money or food;
'Twas the touch of your arm that warmed my
soul,
Your kiss claimed my gratitude."

When the curious ask why he keeps the piece
Of faded cloth old and gray;
The gentleman says it's a talisman
To keep ill fortune away.

But to a few friends he will tell the tale
As he holds it in his hand;
Of the homeless and friendless beggar-man
Whom he once kissed on the Strand.

A SCHOOL-TEACHER'S PRAYER

O Father, I come at the closing of day,
For the boys and the girls in my class to pray;
For every young intellect, life, heart and soul,
That Thy providence placed under my control!

I pray for the few that thou hast endowed
With far keener minds than to most allowed;
Whose comprehension is swift and clear,
Who eagerly grasp each new idea.

Whose eyes are turned ever toward the light,
Who find in learning a pure delight;
With all of their getting, O Lord, of love,
May they search for the wisdom from above.
Make them humble and earnest I pray—
Helpful to those not so clever as they.

I pray for the many of normal brain,
Who merely the passing mark obtain;

Not over-brilliant or stupid are they,
Who do average work in an average way.
O keep them steadfast and faithful and true,
Always doing the best they can do.

But Lord, there are some behind in the race,
Who never can gain a prominent place;
Who triple the time that others expend,
Each problem and task to comprehend.

Those who are backward and dull and slow,
Who cannot learn what they want to know.
God, make them patient, hopeful and brave—
Making the most of what Nature gave.

Lord, I pray for the mischievous lad,
Thoughtless, careless, but not ever bad;
He tries my love and my patience sore,
Yet for his pranks, I love him the more.

I pray Thee for the mannerless boy,
Who robs my teaching of much of its joy;
Because of his stubborn, insolent way,
O make him gentle and docile, I pray.

I pray for the girl who cheats on the sly,
Who looks in her book when I am not by;
And those who indulge in petty untruth,
Teach them honesty, Lord, in days of youth.

The strong ones and weak ones, the dull and bright,
I ask thy blessing upon them tonight,
Bless, O my Father, each lad and each lass,
And strengthen the teacher, O Lord of my class!
Amen.

RETROSPECT

O little village by the bay,
You now lie in my yesterday,
Since miles and months have come between;
What pleasures I in you have seen!

I love your bay's expanse of blue,
The sandy bar you have in view;
The long pier with its rows of light,
Your favorite promenade at night.

I love your streets of quiet shade
And all your charms that God has made;
Your woodland paths and silent nooks
A safe retreat for one with books!

I love the circle at your height,
Whence one can view the pleasant sight
Of sky and water, bush and tree—
Far as Port Monmouth one may see.

But more than sunset skies aglow,
More than the heights and bay below,
More than the shady walks and rills,
More than your lofty lookout hills.

I love the boys and the girls I taught,
Those days with many memories fraught;
The red brick schoolhouse, ivy-twined,
A picture graven on my mind.

Deep in my heart I keep a place,
Where with kind Memory's hand I trace
Days I sat in the teacher's chair—
Oh, would to heaven I now were there!

My boys and girls, I love you still,
Remember me, I know you will;
God keep you earnest, brave and true,
And crown the good I tried to do.

GOD IN ALL

Frequent cares your path besetting
Fill you with rebellious fretting,
All the mercies past forgetting?

Learn God's will.

These are tools that He is holding,
He with them your life is moulding,
Strength of character unfolding—

Watch His skill.

Your best intents all mistaken,
Failed the tasks you've undertaken,
Confidence in mankind shaken,

Faith is dim?

These are means your Lord is using,
So that you, the world refusing,
Will at last of your own choosing

Turn to Him.

On a bed of sickness lying,
Days of suffering, nights of sighing,
Ceaseless pain and weary crying?

Dismal days!

These are threads your Father weaveth
In the pattern He perceiveth,
When your spirit He receiveth,

You will praise.

EUPHRASIA

Justinian, of Rome, the king,
That men his endless praise might sing,
And glory to his house acclaim—
A temple built in Christ's dear name.

Not for his sins would he atone
In that fair pile of rarest stone;
No prayer to rid his soul from blame,
No humble worship was his aim.

And when the steeple towered high
Toward the blue Byzantine sky,
On the cornerstone in lines of flame,
Engraved they the emperor's august name.

When came the dedication eve,
'Tis thus the legend we receive;
An angel clad in robes of light
Was seen descending in the night.

Up on the stone his hand he laid,
And a new inscription there he made;
Then swiftly passed from the sight of man,
While slept in his palace Justinian.

Full soon did consternation spread
When on the morn the name was read;
And wrathful did the emperor cry:
"Who did this thing shall surely die!"

"A woman's name in sooth I see,
Let this Euphrasia come to me."
A woman stepped from the crowded ring—
"Euphrasia I, my lord, the king."

A widow she of humble grace,
The peace of the saints upon her face;
The thronging people with reverent sign
Wafted a prayer to the throne divine.

“Who knows aught of the woman here?
Let him in her behalf appear!”
Thundered the monarch, and at his call
Stepped forth the workmen one and all.

Those who had reared the temple grand
And beside the woman took their stand;
“A holy widow, O king, is she,
Of prayer and deep humility.

She in her simple way, O king,
To our thirsty horses drink did bring;
And straw did place beneath their feet,
Lest they should slip upon the street.

While drawing the loads of marble rare
For building this cathedral fair.”
Then spake the king with mild intent:
“For my sake is this wonder meant,

In my vain and haughty pride,
I sought to spread my glory wide;
And built this church for my own fame,
Though in Jehovah's sacred name,

But lo, this woman meek in heart,
Essayed to share a humble part
In this temple for the Lord;
And her He honors by His word.

'Tis she has built this temple fair,
Not I with all my jewels rare!
Ere God could call this house divine,
He carved Euphrasia's name for mine."

THE LILACS OF LAURELTON

At Laurelton, at Laurelton,
The lilac-bushes grow;
Beside the railroad station
They are planted in a row.

They are planted in a garden
All hedged about with green;
And flanked by little cedars
The fragrant rows between.

The gay purple blossoms nodding,
Do flaunt their beauty rare;
The white ones gently swaying
In their shyness seem more fair.

The sunlight darts and ripples
Athwart the leafy sheen;
And coyly hides and nestles
Neath the boughs of evergreen.

The train is leaving Laurelton,
Deaf-hearted to my pleas;
As the heavyheaded blossoms
Sway gently in the breeze.

A strain of Maytime music
Is borne upon the wind;
As the train swift onward speeding,
Leaves Laurelton behind.

'Tis the wind among the cedars
A song the spruces sing;
The Maytime zephyrs breathing
A sonnet to the spring!

A breath of Maytime sweetness
Still lingers in the train,
A glimpse of leafy greenness,
Then furrowed fields again.

At Laurelton, at Laurelton,
The lilac-bushes grow;
A garden-spot along the way
The tired commuters go!

THE INNER SILENCE ↙

I love to go by myself apart,
And list to the Voice within my heart,
Away from the world's distracting din,
And with the Spirit that dwells within,
Commune in the silence.

My post of duty I need not leave,
This heavenly comfort to receive;
I need but to close my eyes and ears,
And breathe out my doubts, my sins and fears
To God in the silence.

Sweet is the comfort that there I find,
Courage and cheer and peace of mind;
I seem in heaven's own atmosphere
With God Himself as the Presence near,
In the inner silence.

There I find strength for the daily task,
A Father's promise for all I ask,
And go with hope that is born of love,
Of faith and trust in the Lord above,
Out from the silence.

THE LAD AT THE CROSS-ROADS

Deal with him wisely, teacher-friend,
The lad at the turn of the road;
Where paths of childhood suddenly end,
Where the youth shoulders manhood's load.
Use not coercion, but love's kind rein,
Guide and direct by unseen hand;
With strange new powers he strives amain,
On the borders of manhood's land.

Deal with him firmly, teacher-friend,
With the lad of the untamed will;
Try not to break, but lovingly bend,
And encourage to grow, not kill.
Release not your grasp at the helm,
Though fearless he be to steer;
Lest the waves and winds overwhelm,
When the skies of a sudden are drear.

Deal with him patiently, teacher-friend,
For he is neither child nor man;
His self-assurance and pride will mend,
His conceit is in Nature's plan.
Deal with him lovingly and with prayer,
Give to passing mistakes small heed;
The traits that are manly tend with care,
His soul's garden daily weed.

Deal with him reverently, teacher-friend,
He is the man of the coming days;
Future deeds that a world may bend,
Are but dim now in childhood's haze.
Account for that lad you must one day,
Before the great Teacher of men;
Then teach him with trembling, that you may
Receive His commendation then!

A MIRACLE WHICH MAY HAVE HAPPENED

The City of David was wrapt in sleep, the stars
kept watch in the heavens,
The disciples and women lamented sore, while
Pilate tossed in his slumbers.
The moonbeams shone with their silvery light
upon a hill bare and stony
Outside the walls of the city, a hill with crosses
encircled;
The moon, in awe at the sight, into a cloud her
bright face withdrawing,
Silently stole from view and veiled herself like
a maiden.
Up a lonely hillside path a weary traveler was
plodding,
Brown and roughened his face, his dark hair long
and entangled,
His garments such as the peasants wear who
dwell in the towns near Jerusalem.
His countenance troubled and sad as if he were
burdened with sorrow.
Toward a light that gleamed in the darkness he
turned his faltering footsteps,
Toward the little mountain home where he dwelt
alone with his daughter,

With Rachel, the blind, gentle girl, who since
morn had awaited his coming.
How could he tell her the news that would plunge
her young heart in sorrow?
Scarce had he entered the door ere she eagerly
ran to embrace him,
Stormed his ears with her questions, entreating,
imploring for answers.
“Thou comest alone from thy journey? Did not
the Prophet come with thee?
Would He not deign to come? Make haste O
father and tell me.”
“Alas,” said the herdsman in trembling tones, I
thought ere now thou wouldst see me—
Opened thy long-closed eyes, restored by the touch
of the Healer.
For Him I have journeyed far, aye beyond the
sea and the city;
I sought in the temple for Him among the doctors
and elders,
But they laughed when I spoke of Him and asked
if I were a disciple.
The people wept in the streets, methought they
said: “They have killed Him.”
Then with misgiving heart I turned away from
the tumult,
And passed through the city gate, where, without
the walls of Jerusalem
Rises the sloping hill where the Romans slay the
wrong-doers.
There hung the Healer, Rachel, who to-night thine
eyes might have opened.
Crucified like a thief and condemned it was said
by our people.
Some said because of His claim to be the Messiah
long-promised,

Some said for treason He died, for claiming the
power of Caesar.

Whatever the cause, He is dead, the Prophet be-
loved of the peasants.

Tender and fair was His face, His voice was kind
and forgiving.

He was asking a friend, it seemed, to care for
His mother a widow.

But I turned away from the scene, for it saddened
and sickened my spirit,

And I left with a man from the throng, one
Matthew, I think they called him;

Who professed to belong the Twelve who always
accompanied the Healer.

He told me the man's strange life and also much
of His doctrine,

How He foretold His death and even predicted
His rising

The third morn after His death—such was His
faith in Jehovah.

Poor youth, mistaken of course, yet how gentle
and kind was His teaching!

They would lay Him, he said, in the garden of
Joseph, a secret disciple,

In the new-made tomb he had hewn, with spices
worthy His burial.

Ah, heavy the curse of heaven will fall upon our
nation and kindred,

For a just man and holy is slain, one sent by God
for our leading."

Sad was the face of the girl as she prayed that
night by her bedside.

Sadly she whispered, "They've killed Him, and
He my eyes might have opened."

Dark and gray broke the morn, the sun did not
shine in the heavens,

The Sabbath no gladness brought to the home of
Reuben the Herdsman,
For He who could bring them light was afar in
a sepulchre buried.
Yet hope was not dead in the blind girl's heart
for she thought of the Healer's promise.
And soon to her father she spoke, who sat reading
the pages of the scripture;
Isaiah and Moses he read, the Psalms and the
words of the Prophets.
"He said, did he not, my father, the stranger you
met in the city,
That the Healer said He wold rise, that death
should not hold Him forever?
If so, my father, even yet, these eyes may see and
behold thee!
If God hath sent Him indeed, if He is the Messiah
appointed,
He must be highly-favored of God and kept from
the hand of destruction."
"Be still, my daughter, and hear," thus solemnly
answered the herdsman,
When the promised Messiah shall come, He shall
make us free from the Romans;
This man was humble and poor, of Nazareth
parents the offspring,
Of sinners made he his friends and bade them
pay tribute to Caesar.
His work is done, he is dead, and Pilate will guard
the tomb closely,
Will make its entrance fast and sure with the seal
of the ring of the Caesars.
He will live but in memory now, in the hearts of
the people he cherished
For all the good he has done—but rise from the
dead—he cannot!"

“Who hath believed our report ” he read in the
prophet Isaiah,
And “we hid as it were, our faces,” thus read he
the sacred pages.
That night while her father slept in the silence
deep of the midnight,
Rachel the blind girl arose and noiselessly crept
to the doorway,
“It is far to the city,” she sighed, as she thought
of the journey before her;
Perhaps a beast will attack me or perhaps in the
way I may stumble,
But in God will I put my trust, he will bring me
safe to the city!
For this, the third day, He will rise, and I must
be there at the dawning.”
Still was the night toward the dawn and the city
in dreams lay sleeping,
Not a sound save the sighing of the wind and and
the far-away bleating in sheep-cotes.
Gradually came the dawn and pencilled the eas-
tern horizon
With shafts of golden light that seemed like the
lightnings of heaven.
Calm in the garden it was, and the heavy cypress-
es waving,
Betokened a place of graves, of tombs, where the
dead are buried.
Open, a new-made tomb, and a great stone rolled
away from it,
And a light never seen on earth came streaming
out from its portals.
Methinks on the morning breeze were borne the
strains of sweet music
Like to an angel choir, proclaiming the glad
resurrection!

Almost within the gate stood Rachel the blind
patient maiden,
Her countenance hopeful and bright as she quietly
waited and listened,
Till the sound of footsteps drew near on the quiet
street of Jerusalem.
"O sir," she began, with struggling tears, as she
heard a stranger approaching,
"Far have I come and am faint because of the
journey I've taken;
The garden of Joseph to find where the Healer
was yesterday buried.
He said He would rise this morn and I thought
I should be here to meet Him;
Perchance thou knowest, alas, if too late I have
come for the meeting.
O direct me, I pray, kind sir, where I most surely
will find Him."
"Thy faith hath saved thee," said a voice that
thrilled through her inmost being,
"In peace depart and be not dismayed, for I am
He whom thou seekest."
Sweet was the morning air as the gentle voice
died into silence,
And Rachel the maiden arose and lifted her eyes
to the heavens.
Eyes that their beauty saw and the greenness and
freshness of Nature.
An expression of rapture and joy, of hope, long-
deferred and now granted
Spread o'er her pale, tired face as she wept aloud
in her gladness.
"But where is the Healer?" she cried as she sought
here and there vainly for Him,

But alas, He indeed was gone, and the maiden
lingering, listened
To words that were spoken nearby, beyond the
hedge of the garden.
"Lo, He is not here," said a voice, in answer it
seemed to her question,
"As He said, He is risen indeed, and to Galilee
goeth before you."

APART ON THE MOUNTAIN

Apart on the mountain with Jesus,
Apart from my burden and care;
Apart from my sin and temptation,
Alone with my Master in prayer.

Apart on the mountain with Jesus,
Apart from the curious crowd;
Beneath the blue dome of the heavens,
O'ershadowed of God in a cloud.

Apart on the mountain with Jesus,
Apart from my weakness and pride;
No thought of selfish ambition
With Jesus, the Christ at my side.

Apart on the mountain with Jesus,
O holy the vision I see;
The form of my Master transfigured,
O privilege granted to me!

Apart on the mountain with Jesus,
O solitude blessed and sweet;
Apart from wordly encumbrance,
Like Mary I sit at his feet.

Apart on the mountain with Jesus,
Like Peter of old would I stay;
Would build for him here a temple,
But the Savior answers me: "Nay."

And lo, from the foot of the mountain
The cry of the people I hear;
They long for the touch of the Master,
They long for his message of cheer.

And down from the mountain of privilege
The Savior now motions my feet;
"The mountain-top was intended
To make thee for ministry meet."

THE LEGEND OF OFFERUS

Listen my child, to the tale of Offerus, great and
kind hearted,
As to children 'twas told of old by devout and
credulous peasants.

Offerus, proud of his giant strength, searched all
his life for a stronger,
To whom he might offer his life and whom he
might serve as a master.
At length a great king he found to whom he
offered his service,
For none seemed greater than he, the people
bowed down before him;
Mightily in war and in peace, in all that he did,
victorious.
But once he was seen to pale and tremble in great
agitation,

At the sound of a certain name thoughtlessly
spoke in his presence;
The name of Satan it was and death was the word
mentioned with him.
Offerus the name enquired and withdrew his oath
of allegiance,
That he might serve the lord before whom the
great monarch trembled.

Thus Offerus sold his strength to Satan the ruler
of darkness,
That mighty master of men, before whom the
nations fall prostrate.
And Offerus greatly rejoiced because of the Evil
One's power,
And gladly obeyed he his will and won therefore
rich compensation;
Surely no greater than he ere established his
throne o'er the nations!
No army of king was as strong, no monarch had
minions so faithful.
Thus Offerus mused in his heart as he followed
his master in battle.
But once as they passed a hill whereon a cross
was uplifted,
Satan trembled with fear and Offerus noticed his
terror.
"Aha," cried Offerus then—"What meaneth this,
O strange master?
Is there one greater than thou? Methinks the
man that is bound here
Crucified like a thief, must have been greater
than thou art.
If so, his spirit still lives, and from henceforth
he is my master.
I will the greatest serve, no longer thee will I
follow."

Then fled the Bad One away and Offerus prayed
in submission
Before the cross on the hill, and a deep peace
entered his being;
And just then a tender child appeared in the road-
way before him,
And besought him with prayers and tears to carry
him over the river.
Then straightway Offerus knelt and lifted the
child on his shoulder
And bore him over the stream, though once or
twice he did stumble,
Because of the weight of the child which increased
as he kept struggling onward;
Till on the opposite bank he set down his strange,
heavy burden.
When a Shining One stood by his side and said in
heavenly accents:
“Offerus, I am He, to whom thou has just offered
service—
Henceforth my messenger be—Christopher called
—Christ-bearer.”

TELL ME A STORY

“Tell me a story, “the baby said,
As she climbed upon my knee;
“A story of fairies, cousin dear,
Do tell a story to me!”

Then I told her the old, old legends,
Of fairies and knights and kings;
Sleeping Beauty and the handsome prince,
And elves with the gauzy wings.

The wonderful power that fairies gave
Of touching things into gold;
And how they wielded their magic wands
To rejuvenate the old.

And her eyes grew big with wonder,
And her cheek with interest flushed,
As I told how the mighty hero
The horrible monster crushed.

Her merry laughter rippled sweet,
While her breath came short and fast;
As she clamored for yet another tale
More exciting than the last!

Till she fell asleep on my shoulder
To dream of the witches three;
And a sudden longing came o'er me
For a tale to be told to me.

Oh, sweetly real to the children
These stories and legends seem;
With all of the magical trappings
That furnish the elfish dream!

I pity the mortals that sneering say
It is all a sin or joke,
And naught but the stern bare facts of truth
Should be told the little folk.

For who shall define the true and false?
Perchance naught that seems is real;
While the seeming truth of the fairy-lore
Approaches our heart's ideal.

A fragment perhaps of heaven's self
Is breathed in a fairy song;
What love of childhood dares to say
That its simple faith is wrong?

Tell me a story of elfish times,
Of old-time fanciful things;
When animals talked and pigmies lived
In realms of the fairy kings!

Tell me a story—the things that are real
Grow tedious day after day;
But, touched by the wand in a fairy hand,
Are changed in a wonderful way.

Tell me a story of music and song,
Like the murmur of purling streams;
With the silvery chime of the fairy bells
That stole through our childish dreams.

Tell me a story of venturesome love,
Of heroes and daring deeds;
A legend of tryst and devotion true
And stamping of armored steeds.

Tell me a story of knightly days,
Of the reign of sword and song;
Of the ladies fair and gentle squires,
Of tourneys and shouting throng.

Tell me a story—I wait to hear
The fancied lore of the past;
The real old world monotonous grows,
And naught that we love doth last.

So, tell me a story, friend of mine,
Of fairies and giants and kings;
Sleeping Beauty and the handsome prince,
And other marvellous things!

THE LITTLE WHITE LIE

It was only a little white lie, my dear,
But I heard it and so did you;
It slipped out so easily, so unafraid,
Almost before anyone knew!

That little white lie was naughty, my dear,
That's the reason you hung your head;
And your guilty cheek flushed when I questioned
why,
And I heard not the words you said.

The little white lie brought trouble, my dear,
For how heavy it made your heart!
And it robbed your laugh of its music sweet,
And with tears made your blue eyes smart.

It was only a little white lie, my child,
That almost no one had heard;
Except you and me and the angels, my dear,
And the pussy-cat near, who purred.

But the little white lie by your pillow stood,
When you lay in your little bed;
And it looked quite terrible there in the dark,
And bigger than when it was said.

It ran away, quickly that little white lie,
And your heart was rid of its stain;

When you sobbed out the truth on your mother's
 knee,
And promised to be good again!

Let the little white lies alone, my child,
 The big, black ones come in their wake;
And let nothing but truth, dear, your red lips
 speak,
For God and for pure conscience' sake.

THE CHRISTMAS CAMEL

There's a quaint old Arab legend
 I have read or heard somewhere;
I tell it now, my friend, to you,
 For its meaning sweet and fair.

A tale by Eastern Christians treasured,
 And by Moslem Bedouins told;
On the blessed eve of Christmas
 To the children of the fold.

How on that first Christmas morning
 The Three Wise Men journeyed far;
On their camels o'er the desert
 Following the wondrous star.

The Third from a far-off country
 Came on his quest for the King;
And his beast was heavy laden
 With the gifts he fain would bring.

Late was he to reach the stable
 Where the humble family dwelt;
And with them about the manger
 In adoring silence knelt.

Now this Wise Man's patient camel
Followed to the stable door;
Knelt upon its knees and worshipped
When the Wondrous Child it saw.

And the little Christ Child saw it,
Raised its hands above its head,
While in accents sweet and holy
To the kneeling beast it said:

"Thou has come from far, O Camel,
Gifts to lay before my feet;
Henceforth shall no burden touch thee
Save fair gifts for chidhood meet.

Nevermore shall man command thee,
Go in peace to thy far home;
Till once more the star appeareth,
Till once more my birthday come.

Then set upon thy journey
To the homes where children be;
Bestowing gifts that God shall send
On each child that trusts in me."

When the Christmas sun arising
Sheds upon the East his ray,
It awakes the sleeping camel—
Forth he journeys on his way.

Burdened is his back with presents
By God's hand upon him laid;
Christian home or Moslem visits
Where the legend sweet is said.

Thus on every eve of Christmas
Arab children wake to hear
Footsteps of the Christmas Camel
On the sandy desert drear.

And outside the tent or door-way
Ere they lay them down to rest,
They place a little dish of water
And some wheat cakes for the guest.

In their childish dreams they see him,
Laden with the gifts he brings;
For all children good and trusting
As their Arab mother sings.

Sweet the tale we tell our children
Of Santa and the Christmas tree;
Of the sleigh and prancing reindeer—
Yet sweeter far this tale to me.

Of the patient Christmas Camel
Blest of old by the Christ Child's hand;
Laden with the gifts of Allah
Journeying o'er the desert sand!

THE HOLY PLACE

From the far-off Levant country,
Land of mosque and minaret;
Comes this story full of beauty,
Whose fragrant meaning haunts me yet.

In the solemn mosque of Omar,
Built on Mount Moriah's side;
Mount where stood the Hebrew temple,
To pilgrims sacred far and wide—

They have hewn an altar holy,
From the mountain rock eternal;
A shrine to all believers sacred,
Filled with radiance supernal.

The crypt is strewn with myrrh and balsam,
And boughs of fragrant evergreen;
Sweet-smelling spices, hemlock branches,
There prays the pious Turk unseen.

And when from out the mosque of Omar,
Forth he journeys on his way;
Full sweet the fragrance that he scatters
Throughout the hours of the day.

And the pious Moslems murmur,
Though they may not see his face;
"He hath prayed on Mount Moriah,
He cometh from the holy place."

When we kneel in humble worship,
Praying at our Saviour's feet;
O may we sweet fragrance carry
As we leave the mercy-seat.

May the people as they pass us,
In our walk from day to day;
Feel the power of His presence
In the lives of us who pray.

May they see who daily meet us,
Jesus in our shining face;
May they say: "He hath been praying,
He cometh from the holy place."

THE EASTER POWER

Methought on Calvary's mount I stood,
Where all was veiled in tears and blood,
And Death the field did claim;
I knelt by Joseph's garden-grave,
And read the power of Christ to save,
That through His rising came.

I stumbled oft in doubting's mire,
And felt temptation's scathing fire,
And found my strength was naught;
But in each faint and faltering hour,
I claimed and felt the Unseen Power
That Christ at Easter wrought.

O Power of our risen Lord,
O sweet fulfillment of His word,
In thy dear strength I trust!
The cross was not the end, thank God,
The Power hath burst the rendering sod,
That vivifies our dust.

THE UPPER ROOM

Why dwell in the dungeon of doubt and despair,
Why pine in the basement of worry and care?
Come away, my friend, from your toil and strife
To the Upper Room of the Higher Life!

There taste of the comfort that souls cannot know,
Contented to crouch in the shadows below;
Here findeth its way no vestige of gloom,
'Tis brightness and cheer in the Upper Room.

There open your windows toward God and His
heaven,
And think of the gifts that the Father hath given;
There learn the Truth that will work your release,
In the Upper Room of power and peace.

"My peace I leave with you," the Master did say—
Is His peace abiding within you to-day?
'Tis yours for the taking, 'twill outlast the tomb—
Do you know the peace of the Upper Room?

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

986 A. D.

Upon the deck of his good ship
Stood Bjarne Herjulfson,
His fair hair streaming in the wind,
Shone in the morning sun,

Upon the shore his comrades stood,
Brave sons of Vikings all;
No wind-swept sea, no hostile flood
Could their stout hearts appall.

"The sea wind calls and I must go"
Quoth Bjarne Herjulfson,
For I must see my father's face
Before many moons are done.

I go to Greenland's far-off shore
Through the waves of the unknown sea,
If ye are Vikings stout and true,
Come, make the voyage with me."

Then spake the sage Thorwaldsen,
A scald of Norway, he;
"Tempt not, I pray you, Herjulfson,
The dread and darksome sea!

There demons lurk and spirits dread,
The merman and the whale;
Death doth reign o'er the ocean vast,
And woe on its every gale.

Westward is Greenland's fabled shore,
And every scald will tell
The setting sun is fiery red
Because it looketh down on hell!

'Tis now a year since Herjulf sailed
To that same unknown shore;
Methinks a voice on the night wind says
We shall see his face no more."

Herjulfson laughed a merry laugh,
His laugh rang glad and free;
"My father's son, brave Thorwaldsen,
Is a Viking true!" quoth he.

"We'll follow thee," his comrades cried;
"Afar o'er the darkening wave;
For be it known, a Norseman bold
Fears not a watery grave!"

And so they sailed from the Norway shore
When the billows high were piled;
And drank in foaming nut brown ale,
"Skoal" to the Northland wild.

Westward the good ship's prow they turned,
Westward they turned their gaze;
And soon the Northern sun went down
In threatening glare and haze.

Wild tossed the billows of the deep,
The angry thunders roared;
The flapping sails were wet and torn,
And creaked each mast and board.

Three days the sun forgot to rise,
Three nights no stars appeared;
Nor friendly sail upon the sea
The Norsemen's courage cheered.

In the prow of his battered ship
Herjulfson stood and prayed;
Great Thor besought and Balder fair,
His voyage might safe be made.

The fourth morn calmer grew the sea,
The hopeful sun arose;
And land, yes, land before them lay,
Unwhitened by the snows.

A land whose bare and rocky coast
Betokened not their goal;
Despair and strange alarming fears
Assailed Herjulfson's soul.

Then northward turned he his good ship,
And prayed for Norway's shore;
But skirted wooded islands strange,
Unseen by man before.

They lightly sprang from their good ship
Upon the grassy strand,
And found fresh springs of water clear
And grapes on every hand.

And marks they found of man's abode,
Arrows of flint and stone;
But sign of hut or living thing,
On all that shore was none.

Then on they sailed those dauntless youths
And reached the open sea;
Thorwaldsen's words rang in their ears
With harsh, cruel mockery.

But with the morrow's rising sun,
Again land came in sight;
Whose mountains towered toward the sky,
Green in the morning light.

Soon huts they saw upon the strand
And fishing rafts afloat;
The Viking ship was soon espied
While shouts rang from each throat.

Upon the deck of his good ship
Stood Bjarne Herjulfson;
His fair hair streaming in the wind,
Shone in the morning sun.

And Herjulf stood upon the shore,
"Welcome, my son," cried he;
"And all ye Norsemen stout and true
Who dared the unknown sea!

But why from southward is your course?
Westward ye must have sailed;
Far to the southward have I gone,
But land was never hailed."

As they leaped on the long-sought shore.
Each Norseman told the tale
Of the dread voyage upon the deep
Midst thunder, dark and gale.

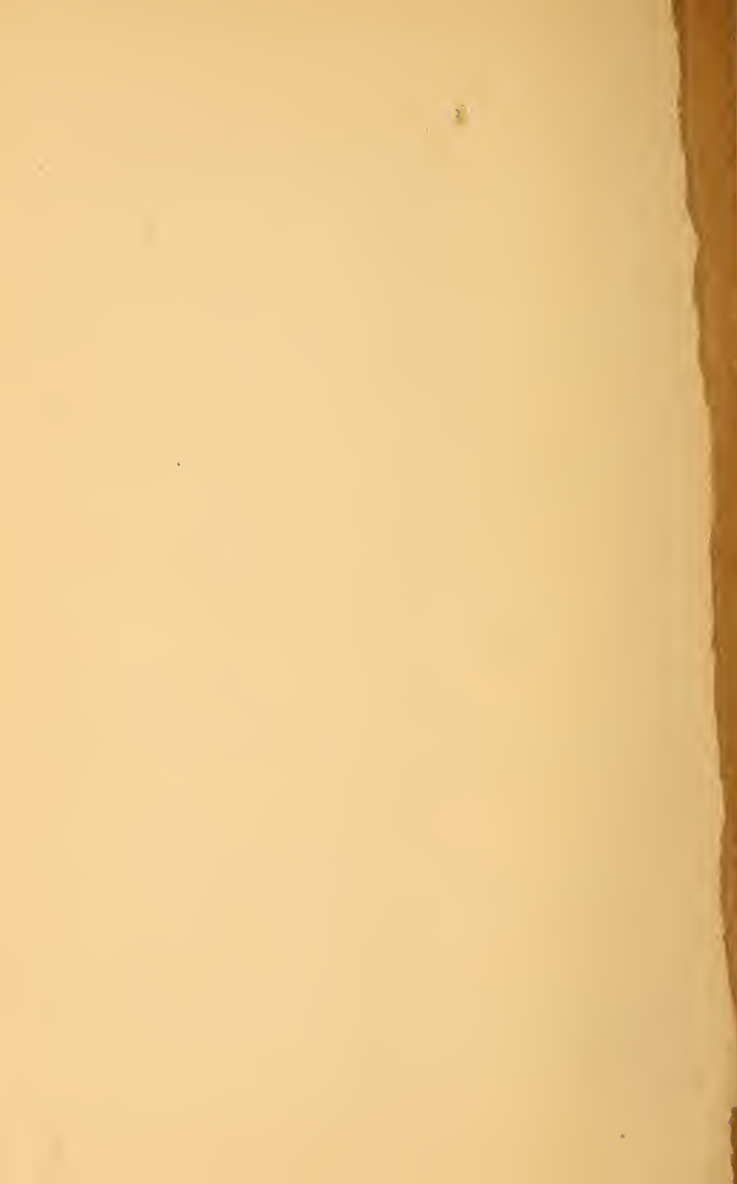
Told of the strange discovered land
Of the wooded islands fair;
Far to the south of Greenland's shore,
And realms of the Northern Bear.

Told of the springs of water clear,
And luscious grapes to eat,
Of arrow heads of flint and stone,
And prints of savage feet.

Then Herjulf and his comrades said:
"Tis a tale most strange and new;
But further voyages shall prove
If Bjarne's words are true."

Soon back to Norway's shore they sailed,
But no scald there could say
What was the new land they had found
To the southward far away.

Five hundred years went slowly by
Ere again that tale was new;
While America our land is proof
That Bjarne's words were true!









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